

Fiscal Year 2023
ANNUAL REPORT



ROOTED *in Love*



PRISON
FELLOWSHIP

A Firm Foundation

What the Lord has accomplished at Prison Fellowship®, especially through the challenges of the last few years, far surpasses anything I could have envisioned when I came on board in 2016. It has been an enormous blessing and privilege for me to lead this ministry and have a front-row seat to countless inspiring stories of transformation—impact you are making possible.

As you may recall, during the pandemic, we had the opportunity to sell our headquarters near Washington, D.C., to a Christian advocacy group. As prisons reopened, the Board authorized us to spend some of the proceeds from this sale to expand our signature Prison Fellowship Academy throughout the country. To do so, we wrote a budget with a \$4 million deficit; and, by God's grace and provision, we met it. We added 54 new Academy sites in 7 states during the fiscal year! Toward the fiscal year-end, I worked with my successor, Heather Rice-Minus, to restructure the ministry to better align it with the vision the Lord has given her for Prison Fellowship's future.

God has faithfully opened doors time and again. Now that pandemic closures are fully behind us, we are back in prisons full force. In fact, by the end of this fiscal year, Prison Fellowship met nearly every goal of our 10-year strategic plan three years ahead of schedule!

Prison Fellowship's work has remained rooted in the truth and hope of the Gospel. With your support, we have been serving prisoners and families in states where we once had no ministry presence. Now, prisoners line up for applications because they see something "different" about the men and women in these programs.

Thank you for your generous partnership, especially now as Prison Fellowship embarks on a new chapter with Heather Rice-Minus taking the helm. I'm grateful God has chosen her to guide the ministry further into its post-founder era. I am so excited to see what the Lord has in store under her leadership.

This life-changing work would not be possible without you, and I thank God for you. May He fill you with peace and joy as you walk with Him.

A man in a dark suit is standing by a large window, looking out. The window is made of several large panes, and the view outside shows greenery and a building. The man is standing on a patterned rug. The lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

James J. Ackerman

James J. Ackerman
President and CEO, retiring

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black blazer and skirt, stands in profile looking out a large window. The window shows a view of a city with greenery and buildings. The background of the text is a light blue sky with soft clouds.

Growing With Purpose

As we enter a new chapter together, I'm so grateful for the Lord's faithfulness and for the prayerful support of James and all our partners. I am honored to be a part of this exciting time at Prison Fellowship and to share this report with you.

Prison Fellowship is rooted in a rich history that spans nearly five decades—a history of amazing grace, miraculous transformations, and Christ's unfailing love for every person touched by incarceration. We're witnessing an undeniable culture shift in prisons across the U.S., and we are well positioned to build on the incredible momentum that's been growing nationwide. Chuck's original vision of restoration is still our mission today, and your generosity is what keeps us moving forward.

Prison Fellowship continues to find favor with corrections leaders, reframe the national conversation on corrections, and bring biblical values to the public square. We will strive to equip followers of Christ to engage in this work, believing that the Church exists to be the hands and feet of Jesus on Earth.

We believe that many of tomorrow's leaders are behind bars today—in Academy classrooms, at Hope Events, in prison chapels, in quiet cells praying for purpose. Prison Fellowship is creating pathways to transform their lives, equip the Church inside, and inspire a generation of culture changers. On the outside, we're excited to more comprehensively equip local churches and other partners to bring hope to incarcerated men and women, lift up the children and families of prisoners, and raise a voice for justice that restores. As we inspire the local church to worship and grow alongside the Body of Christ behind bars, I believe we will see revival in the Church in America.

Thank you for playing an integral role in making sure this ministry never wavers. We celebrate all that God has done and will continue to do. As they say in the Academy, we are *"better than yesterday, not done yet!"*

Heather Rice-Minus

Heather Rice-Minus
President and CEO-Elect



A tree without roots doesn't last long in a storm. To sustain our growth and expand our impact, we must treasure the long-standing principles that undergird our faith and work.

That's why Prison Fellowship remains deeply devoted to the vision Chuck Colson laid out almost 50 years ago. As we hold to this vision through changing seasons, God has proven Himself faithful as incarcerated men and women continue to be transformed by the power of the Gospel.

None of this would be possible without our partners: churches, donors, volunteers. As we abide in the Vine together and each do our part, we get to watch God's power on display.



True to Our Roots, *Growing Together*

**I am the vine; you are the branches.
If you remain in me and I in you,
you will bear much fruit; apart
from me you can do nothing.**

—John 15:5, NIV

Chuck longed to see the Church strengthened and equipped not only to reflect the love of Jesus, but also to shape the culture by being salt and light in the world. Chuck believed these two visions must be “conjoined and collaborative”—and so do we.

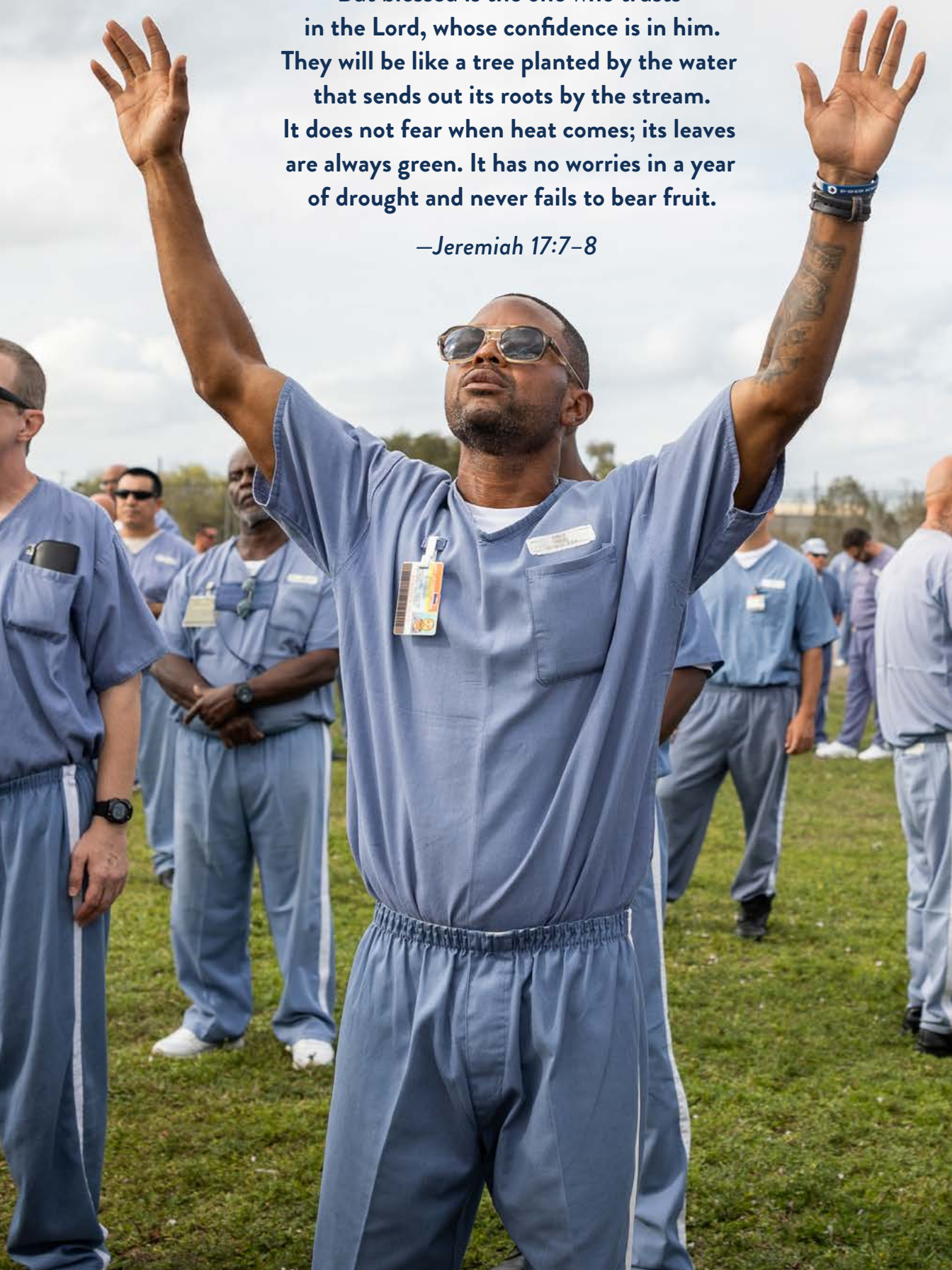
The Church is a vital partner in ministry, growing in tandem and mutually strengthened as we do the Lord’s work together and behold His heart for prisoners.

As we nurture the spiritual growth of men and women behind bars, we prepare new leaders for local churches. As church members partner with us to go into prison, their spiritual gifts bless those they serve—and their own lives are transformed in the process.

The Spirit of God is kindling revival in the darkest of places—we have seen it, and it’s growing. As we look to the future, we are eager to see the ways God will deepen and expand our reach, our faith, and our fruitfulness.

But blessed is the one who trusts
in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves
are always green. It has no worries in a year
of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

—Jeremiah 17:7–8



Planting Seeds of *Change*

The heartbeat of Prison Fellowship is ministry to those living behind bars—because we believe prison can be a life-changing journey.

Thanks to the Church's partnership and your faithful support, men, women, and families are healing and growing in Christ. New programs like Create: New Beginnings® offer participants guidance and space to heal in a harmonious community unlike anything they've known in prison. As the Gospel brings light behind bars through Hope Events and Bibles for prisoners, tomorrow's leaders are graduating from the Prison Fellowship Academy.

The Academy employs holistic curriculum and trained, compassionate coaches to help incarcerated men and women embrace new values and behavior. From exploring identity to forming new goals, participants dig deep into who they are, what shaped them, and where they are headed now.

This last year alone, we added 54 new Academy sites in 7 states. Because of your support, people are returning home from prison changed and equipped to lead flourishing, productive lives. Based on principles of transformational leadership, Prison Fellowship Pathways™ empowered incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women to live out their transformation and practice the Values of Good Citizenship. At chapters in 4 states, participants built community and received peer support in prison and outside. Prison Fellowship celebrates this pattern of renewal, knowing it is only by the power of God that we continue the good work He has begun

Emerging With *Impact*



Brighter Futures

The **Prison Fellowship Academy** grew this fiscal year from 146 sites to 218 sites, active in 41 states. More than 1,000 prisoners graduated from the Academy this fiscal year. Our Academy efforts are supported by the dedicated work of 3,488 in-prison volunteers.

Truth That Transforms

123,770 **Bibles** were distributed to the residents of correctional facilities across the country.

Gospel Hope

Nearly 35,000 prisoners participated in 313 **Hope Events** held at prison yards nationwide. At these gatherings, the Gospel was shared, and 6,028 people made a commitment to follow Christ.



Shining Light

Floodlight®, our in-prison digital media platform, made life-giving content available to more than 570,000 prisoners in 49 states.

The Art of Healing

More than 330 women behind bars participated in **Create: New Beginnings®**, Prison Fellowship's restorative art workshops, where they used creative expression to process trauma and find inner healing. Through a partnership with Tyndale House Publishers, this program will soon be offered beyond prison as a small group resource for women everywhere.

Inspired Inside

Prison Fellowship's quarterly newspaper, **Inside Journal®**, published in men's, women's, and Spanish editions, was delivered to more than 1 million prisoners.

Empowering Parents

Thanks to partnership between prison chaplains and Prison Fellowship staff and volunteers, more than 28,000 incarcerated parents took part in 244 **Angel Tree Parent Day™** events, where they were encouraged to be a positive influence in their children's lives.

The Lord is gracious and
righteous; our God is full of
compassion. The Lord protects
the unwary; when I was
brought low, He saved me.

—Psalm 116:5–6, NIV



Branching Out to *Families*

The high calling of parenthood does not end at the prison gates. Since 1982, Prison Fellowship Angel Tree® has provided incarcerated parents with a way to show love and foster connection. The program expanded with year-round opportunities like camping and sports camps, and many churches come alongside local Angel Tree families throughout the year.

This year, Prison Fellowship launched the First Chance Network™, a group of community nonprofit partners providing opportunities for Angel Tree children. The network connects prisoners' families in five focus cities to organizations that have the expertise and the heart to lend a hand. This vision is carried over into the First and Second Chances Philanthropy Council, composed of corporations and foundations seeking to holistically support children with incarcerated parents and unlock second chances for people with a criminal record. The council hosted its first summit in September 2023.

Increasing our ministry to families, we remain rooted in one goal: *to see their hope renewed.*



**Showing
Families
They Are
*Never Alone***



The Gift of Relationship

Through **Angel Tree Christmas**, 253,132 children received a gift, the Gospel, and a personal message of love on behalf of their mom or dad in prison. They were served thanks to the efforts of more than 5,000 volunteer **Angel Tree** church coordinators in all 50 states. Prison Fellowship distributed more than 63,000 Bibles to Angel Tree kids and their families.

A Game-Changer for Kids

Last year, 1,559 Angel Tree kids participated in **sports camps**, often in partnership with major sports teams, where they received coaching and mentoring from professional athletes and coaches. 443 children and caregivers made decisions for Christ at these events.

A Faith Adventure

Last summer, 4,917 Angel Tree kids attended 229 **summer camps**, where they experienced outdoor fun and friendship. Most exciting of all, 885 Angel Tree campers made a commitment to follow Christ.

Making Paths to Success

Prison Fellowship's **First Chance Network** aligns the efforts of local churches and partnering nonprofit organizations with the generous support of corporate partners such as Walmart, Coca-Cola Consolidated, and Uber, along with local churches and grassroots organizations, with the aim of creating a future where every child can flourish. This past year, the First Chance Network delivered 23 helpful and enriching experiences to Angel Tree families in key cities, including STEM camps, dental clinics, and career training opportunities.

Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed ...

—Isaiah 1:17, NIV



Cultivating a Passion for *Restoration*

Prison Fellowship's work is grounded in our belief in God's power to redeem and restore the broken—not only individual people but entire systems.

For more than 40 years, our advocacy team has brought biblical values to the public square and amplified the call for a more transformative justice system. We advocate for proportional punishment, constructive prison culture, and a society that offers second chances. Every April, we celebrate Second Chance Month® to shine light on the barriers faced by 1 in 3 American adults with a criminal record and unlock opportunities to success.

Many of our advocates and Justice Ambassadors influence lawmakers by leveraging their stories—the compelling experiences of people impacted by a system they now strive to change. As we equip followers of Christ to take action, we can inspire the Church to develop a consistent witness and seek justice for all.

A Growing *Movement*

WE ALL NEED
A
SECOND CHANCE!





Advocacy

Second Chances: In April, more than 880 partner organizations joined our **Second Chance Month®** celebration to lift up the 70 million Americans with a criminal record. The White House and 23 states declared support. Our #BeTheKey social media campaign led 1.5 million people to view messages promoting second chances.

Justice Advocacy: More than 43,000 **Justice Advocates** contacted hundreds of lawmakers to raise their voices for justice reform. Our more than **Justice Ambassador** volunteers engaged in targeted grassroots advocacy work.

Championing Change: We are working to end inconsistent sentencing, improve oversight in prisons, modernize the supervised release system, and educate offices about the **First Step Act's** success. In Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, we are influencing laws and culture

around issues like policing, constructive prison culture, and access to employment and housing.

Reframing Corrections

151 prison leaders representing 100 facilities in 22 states graduated from **Warden Exchange®**, Prison Fellowship's transformative training program that brings together wardens and other senior correctional staff to reimagine the culture and outcomes of prison.

Thriving Together

Prison Fellowship Pathways™ empowered incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women to live out their transformation and practice the Values of Good Citizenship. Pathways grew to 9 chapters in 4 states, enabling 159 participants to perform 25 service projects, receive peer support, build community, and continue their transformation journeys both in prison and beyond the walls.

Beautiful Lives



Demarcus Wade

*Academy participant and
Angel Tree parent, Virginia*

“[The Prison Fellowship Academy] was one of the best steps that I could have ever taken as a man who wanted to grow and become more than what he was. The curriculum was amazing. And the reality is, as a parent, when you’re not there to be with your kids, you still want to be the provider for your children. Angel Tree was such a blessing.”

Jennifer Marx

*Participant in Academy and
Create: New Beginnings, Minnesota*

“I never thought I was going to grow up and go to prison, and that was what was going to make my life into something beautiful. Prison Fellowship molded me. The Academy saved my life and changed it for the better. It was a combination of me, Prison Fellowship, and God. I do believe that made me who I am right now.”



in Bloom



Melvin Battiest

*Prison Fellowship Academy participant,
Oklahoma*

“That Academy was so influential in who I am today. It was basically a reminder of who Christ was in my life, the principles of being a godly man, and the life that I should be living while I’m in prison. I knew I had a calling in my life, but I didn’t really know the direction it was going to go. Prison Fellowship gave me the tools I didn’t have before.”

Aimee Wehner

Angel Tree volunteer, North Carolina

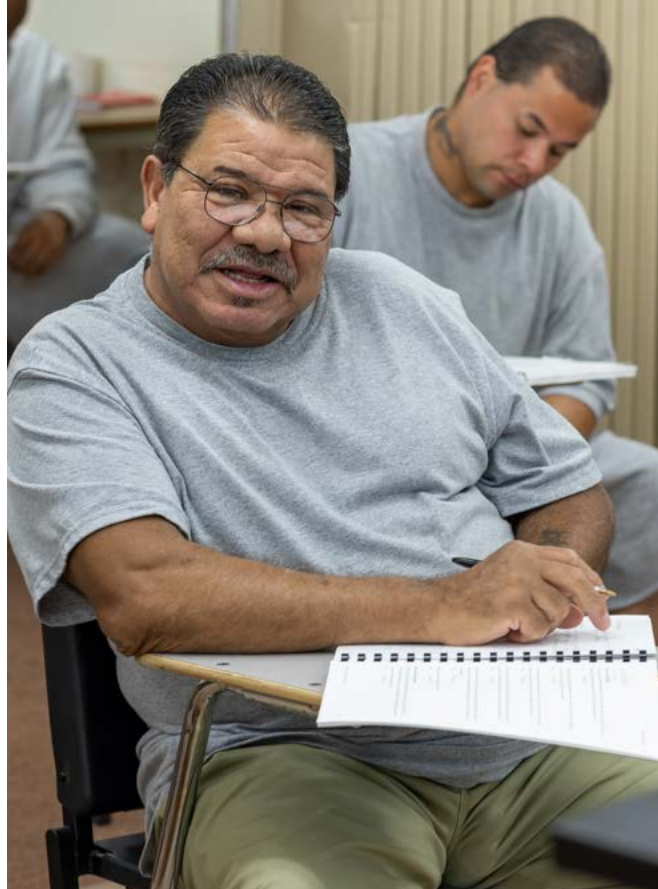
“I do the Angel Tree Christmas program with our church. We get to bridge the gap between the parent in prison and these children out here. What a gap it is. The people that volunteer, it touches them. I do it because we’re an Angel Tree recipient family. It’s amazing that this organization does all this.”





Firm Foundations. *Ongoing Growth.*

Reflecting on this fiscal year, we celebrate the extraordinary ways the Lord has blessed us and granted many post-pandemic opportunities. During the challenging COVID period, we made the strategic decision, with the full approval of our dedicated Board of Directors, to sell our Lansdowne office building to a Christian religious liberty organization.



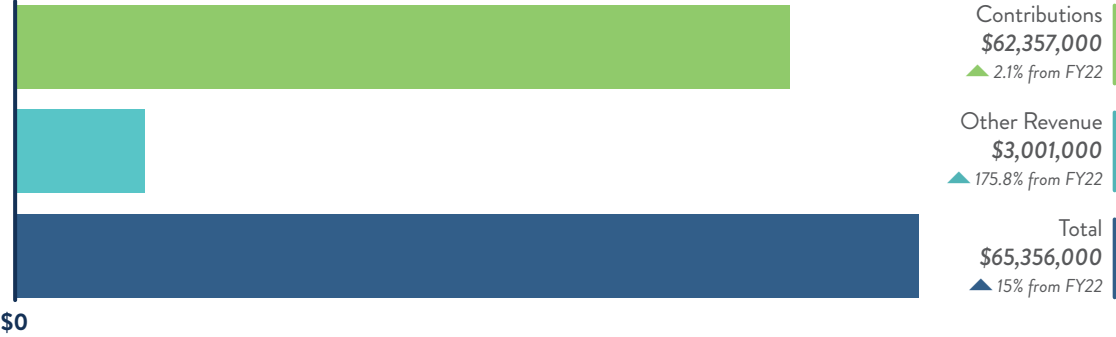
This year we made the strategic decision to reinvest a portion of the proceeds from the sale of our property in the growth of the Prison Fellowship Academy in the wake of the pandemic. Collaboratively with our Board, we crafted a budget that carried a meaningful deficit, allowing us to channel some of the proceeds from the building sale towards launching new Academy sites in prisons around the country as access was fully restored.

God has richly blessed our work and faithful pursuit of Prison Fellowship's mission. We are witnessing an unprecedented acceleration in the growth of the Prison Fellowship Academy model. More and more prisons are becoming places of hope and healing, and prisoners are experiencing the transformation that only comes through Christ.

We are so grateful for supporters like you who believe radical life change is possible. Through your unwavering commitment, you are instrumental in sowing seeds of hope and peace in the lives of prisoners, their families, and entire communities nationwide. Thank you for standing alongside us. With God's grace, we anticipate that this ministry will continue to yield an abundant harvest.

Financials

TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE

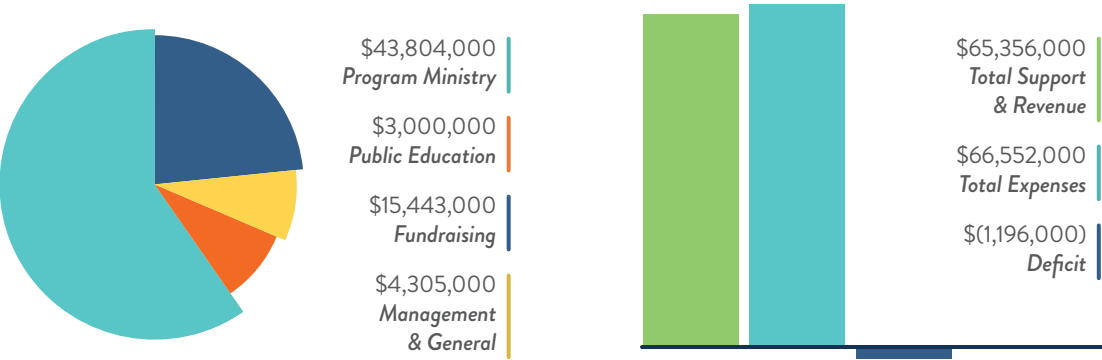


Other Revenue Includes
Investment Return (net)
\$2,783,000
Miscellaneous Revenue
\$218,000
Loss on Sale of Assets
\$(2,000)

FY23 Net Assets
Without Donor Restrictions
\$27,215,000
With Donor Restrictions
\$19,125,000
Total
\$46,340,000

Contribution Stats
Largest Giving Month
DECEMBER
Number of Gifts ≥ \$5,000
1,105
Largest Gift From Single Donor
\$2MM

TOTAL EXPENSE BREAKDOWN



To see complete audited financials, go to prisonfellowship.org/resources/financials.

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**Our mission: To restore those affected
by crime and incarceration**

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